EXPLORATORY BEGINNING READING TECHNIQUES FOR SIX-YEAR-OLDS AT HANAWALT SCHOOL, DES MOINES, IOWA

BY

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM OF LEARNING TO READ

Educators are becoming increasingly cognizant of the tremendous influence a teacher's philosophy has upon the type of beginning program she is likely to develop. Time was when philosophy was reserved for the college professor; the teacher of beginning reading must content herself with the primer and its contents. Modern education stresses the import of an acceptable philosophy of education against which the teacher can test practices and procedures. The techniques discussed in this study are an attempt at unfolding realistically, with children, a reading philosophy aimed at making reading an enjoyable, satisfying, enriching experience for each individual child.

Reading is an important part of modern living. Written communication is second only to oral; man depends a great deal upon the printed word as a medium for the exchange of thoughts and ideas.[1] The reading man does, to some extent, affects his success in business, his awareness of social change, his ability to assemble and manipulate gimmicks and gadgets of all sorts, his enjoyment of

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[1]Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond, Teaching the Child To Read, p. 8. New York: The Macmillen Company, 1944.

stories and articles, his understanding of the past as recorded on the printed page, and his total development as a productive personality. An exhaustive list of the benefits of reading in the adult world could be made. Even so, it is doubtful that the value of the ability to read to an adult could be placed high enough to surpass a six-year-old's idea of the anticipated glories of being able to read!

The need for communication is a very real thing to a child--so real that in infancy he learned to call mother by crying or screaming. He may have even devised ways of communicating with her by which she could detect whether he was wet, angry, hungry, or sleepy. These sufficed for a short time, but soon he found he could imitate sounds which brought a certain response, and, as he developed, he learned to talk. And what a useful skill it was! Now he could ask questions, tell what he wanted, tell how he felt, communicate with other children, and carry on a stimulating conversation with adults. Satisfying as this skill may be, it is adequate in his estimation only until the child becomes aware of this mysterious system of communication whereby people can tell you something and you can tell them something by use of certain symbols on paper. The extent to which this curiosity about the written word exists, as well as the age when it is likely to begin, varies with individual children.

Educators have been greatly concerned with this

pre-reading period and it's relationship to the beginning reading program. The teacher who is aware of a child's interest in learning to read (or the lack of it), and his physical and mental readiness for reading is more likely to adapt a reading program to the individual needs of the children than is the one to whom enrollment in first grade automatically makes them ready for reading. There is no magic in the door to the first grade room which makes all who enter ready to read. Some experts in the field of reading readiness have said that a mental age of six years and six months is necessary to insure success in beginning reading, and that reading should be delayed for any child until he has reached that mental age.[1] Others, however, point out that some slow children do not reach that mental age until their second or third year of school, and that even when reading is delayed success cannot be insured: many of them are retarded readers.[2] Conversely, many children with a mental age less than six years and six months are successfully taught to read. Obviously, there is more to reading readiness than having arrived at a particular mental age.

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[1]Mabel Vogel Morphett, and Carleton Washburn, "When Should Children Begin To Read?" Elementary School Journal, XXI (March, 1931), 496-503.

[2]Marion Monroe, Children Who Cannot Read, p. 159. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932.

To be ready to learn to read a child should see well, hear well, be able to speak clearly and distinctly, have sufficient motor coordination so that he can sit on the floor or on a chair for a short period of time, and be in such general good health that he does not become easily fatigued and seem listless. He should have a certain amount of social development and emotional stability. If he cries easily and often, is insecure and unhappy, he is not free to give his attention to learning to read.[1]

Tests have been devised, aimed at determining a child's readiness for reading. A danger of placing too much importance on a child's test score must be pointed out. There is a growing tendency on the part of teachers to accept as gospel the test score, which, at best, is but one indicator of readiness, and which does not take into account the child's emotional or physical condition the day he took the test. It would be foolhardy for any teacher to use test scores as a sole indicator of reading readiness. A teacher who understands children and the concept of readiness, working and living with children each day in the classroom can do a far better job of determining when children are ready to read. McKee evaluates six most widely used reading readiness tests thus:

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[1]Lillian Lamoreaux and Doris Lee, Learning To Read Through Experience, p. 203. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1943.

> None of the tests provide a measurement of the child's desire to learn to read or his ability to understand spoken language, although some of them do attempt to measure his ability to use sentences. In the judgment of the writer, some of the tests include a measurement of matters which, although they may be related to reading disability and consequently have a diagnostic value, are not of particular importance to the measurement of readiness for beginning reading.[1]

The desire to learn to read, provided a child is physically capable, must not be underestimated as a necessary ingredient of the total readiness picture. If a child is bursting his buttons to learn to read his desire and enthusiasm can over-shadow his inability to find the sixth pig, as the test may require. On the other hand, a child with a perfect test score who shows no enthusiasm for reading is not ready--such activity would, as yet, have little or no purpose for him. It then becomes the responsibility of the teacher to provide activities and experiences which will make the child anxious and curious about this business of reading.

A discussion of readiness for reading would be incomplete if it did not mention the child's background of experiences and how those experiences contribute to his potential reading ability. A child who has been many places and seen many things can visualize real things when coming in contact with the simulus of the written word. To a child who has never been to a farm, a cow might just

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[1]Paul McKee, The Teaching of Reading In the Elementary School, p. 181. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948.

as well be an xio. The word is void of meaning. If a child's background of experience is very limited the school must provide much opportunity for experiences. A teacher must know the types of homes and schools from which the children come, and as much as possible about their experiences. It cannot be assumed that because children are from homes in a comparable socio-economic group their experiences are similar. The child's environment and status within the family unit greatly affect his readiness for reading. The child who has been read to, whose parents have taken time to answer or investigate his numerous inquiries, who has had opportunity to assume responsibility and grow independently, has a background of experience far richer than the child from an equally wealthy home who has not been read to, who spends very little time with either parent, or who is unduly pampered and coddled. The parents' attitude toward the school and education in general are forces which influence constructively or adversely the child's outlook as he approaches the task of learning to read.

It is, therefore, natural that a child's first reading should be about or a part of his realm of experiences. The thing he reads should have real meaning to him. He might make a picture of his house and the teacher write <u>This is my house</u> on the bottom of the sheet. It <u>tells</u> something. From the very beginning the teacher must remember that reading is a thought-getting process. It is more

than a word-calling process. For a child whose approach to reading has been that of mechanically saying flash cards, the thought-getting concept is lacking.

Hildreth made a study of beginning ready techniques and concluded:

> Any partial process from which the child does not derive ideas--word pronunciation exercises, or phonics, or speech or language drill--is not reading. These activities may facilitate reading skill, but they do not in themselves constitute reading. If this fact were more clearly understood by teachers there might be less arbitrary and disassociated work in the mechanical aspects of reading instruction and more emphasis on comprehension of reading text.[1]

The use of the experience approach to reading does several important things for children. In addition to having meaning to the reader experience stories are child centered, putting the emphasis on the child and his immediate world rather than the process itself or upon a world created for him by a pre-primer writer who knows little of the child's interests or experiences. Also, experience stories were once oral, and children usually read them as they spoke them: smoothly, in complete thought units rather than in a choppy, series-of-words manner. The vocabulary used is the child's. When the word or sound approach to reading is used, the child's own vocabulary lies dormant (for reading purposes) while a new vocabulary is forced upon him. This

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[1]Gertrude Hildreth, Learning the Three R's, p. 80. Minneapolis: Educational Publishers, Inc., 1938.

hardly seems logical when his most powerful skill of oral communication could be his greatest help in getting an idea from a printed page.

People in the reading field are not in complete agreement, however, as to whether learning to read through experience is superior to the sight-word approach. McKee advances the argument that the experience approach produces sloppy readers, not careful about knowing each word; that the vocabulary cannot be sufficiently controlled; that it is necessary for a child to learn to identify printed words as such before we can actually call it reading.[1] He goes on to suggest presentation of new words, as in a pre-primer, as the most sensible way to learn to read.

This method is used a great deal. Teachers are supplied with a series of basic texts and a manual to follow. The typical pre-primer and primer present something less than a highly interesting content. The actual experiences of the average six-year old are far superior to those he will read about in the pre-primer. One authority said: "The teacher must be a super salesman and do everything but stand on her head to interest children in a content built out of three or four words."[2] An examination of currently published pre-primers verifies this view.

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[1]McKee, op. cit., p. 222.

[2]Emmet A. Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction, p. 386. New York: American Book Co., 1946.

As learning by doing has become more common in schools, reading has become an integrated part of the entire activity program. It is not isolated or detached. It originates from the activities and experiences of the children, which means that content and ideas conveyed will be those of the children. Thus reading becomes functional. Gertrude Hildreth elaborates upon this point of view:

> Reading is considered a functional skill rather than a formal school exercise. In traditional schools reading was often devoid of genuine purpose. Emphasis was centered on the process itself, rather than on the functions it served. Reading directed toward satisfying the learner's purposes proves to be more satisfying and effectual than reading 'to read, a process that begins and ends in itself.'[1]

It must be pointed out, too, that no words are too difficult or too long for a child to read when they are a part of his speaking vocabulary. No ceiling is put on a child's vocabulary, and he feels that anything that can be written can be read. How different this is from a strictly controlled vocabulary which does not vary with children's interests, a vocabulary which is the teacher's or the book's, and because it has not been presented to me (as the child) I have no responsibility for identifying it.

While there is much disagreement among authorities as to the use of an analytical or experience approach, it must not be overlooked that reading is a developmental process. Sooner or later in that developmental process a

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[1]Hildreth, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

child discovers for himself or must be shown how to analyze and attack new words, how to classify information, skim, etc. Basal texts in reading have provided teachers with an organized plan, and to what extent they should be followed merits some study and experimentation.

THE PROBLEM OF TECHNIQUES

The writings in the field of reading indicates a wide divergence of opinion as to what constitutes a good beginning reading program. Yet all authorities agree that upon success in reading hinges, to a large extent, success in school. Comprehension and appreciation are desirable outcomes. How to achieve them, then, warrants consideration. Each group of children, because of their individuality, presents a new problem as to how to help each child grow and develop as a successful reader. In this study an attempt will be made to explore many techniques of beginning reading and evaluate them on the basis of the contribution each did or did not make toward the reading progress of the six-year-olds at Hanawalt School, Des Moines, Iowa.

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING FOR THIS STUDY

The beginning reading techniques which will be discussed were used at Hanawalt School, Des Moines, Iowa, in the 1953-54 school year.

Hanawalt Elementary School is located high on a hill at 1 Fifty-sixth Street in Des Moines, Iowa. It is a small two-story brick structure, built in 1916 at the back of a densely wooded area to accommodate what was at that time a sparsely populated area at the western extremity of the city. The first story of the building is divided into four classrooms and a small hall. In the hall hangs an impressive portrait of Dr. George Hanawalt, a physician for whom the school was named. The second story houses two classrooms, an auditorium now pressed into use as a classroom, a small principal's office, and a nurse's office. The boys' and girls' washrooms, the art-music room, and the furnace room are in the basement. Eight classroom teachers teach the 290 children who are enrolled in grades kindergarten through sixth. The principal and nurse are in the building two days each week.

The first grade room is in the southwest corner of

the building. It is 24 feet by 32 feet in size. Blackboards and bulletin boards cover most of the two end walls. Along the west side of the room are five high windows. The space along the east wall is taken up with lockers for the children's wraps, a bulletin board, and a large old-fashioned cupboard for the teacher's supplies. Furniture includes four eight-pupil tables with a drawer for each child.

The families who live in the Hanawalt district are, for the most part, mediocrely wealthy, well educated, and socially prominent. It is a large district with few children. Many of the residents are older people and there is little moving into or out of the district. A number of the parents attended Hanawalt as children. The fathers are chiefly highly successful professional and business men, much interested in education and frequent school visitors. Few of the mothers work at a job outside of the home, but many are active with club and community work. The homes are in a lovely residential area of Des Moines, with large well-kept lawns. Most families employ one domestic servant.

Most of the children at Hanawalt are neat, lively youngsters, well dressed, healthy, and, for the most part, happy. Many of them mirror the stimulation of the homes from which they come. They are bright, curious children, more anxious to be leaders than followers. As six-year olds, coming into first grade, they are tremendously articulate

and anxious to learn to read. They have a wide range of experiences from which to draw. They have been read to a great deal, and most have traveled some.

Of this particular group of six-year-olds only one child comes from a home of a lower socio-economic level than the others. She lives on a small acreage at the edge of the district. This child, however, has the advantages of a close family relationship in a large family, a rural home, and parents much interested in education.

TABLE 1

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING OF PARENTS OF TWENTY-FIVE SIX-YEAR-OLDS AT HANAWALT SCHOOL, DES MOINES, IOWA

Occupation Groups	Mothers	Fathers
Housewife	23	
Business Owners	1	10
Business Managers		8
Professional	1	3
Laborer		1
Unemployed		1
Deceased		2

The parents of the children are, for the most part, well educated. This is shown in Table 2 on page 14.

The children were divided into four flexible groups: Joan's class, Fritzie's class, Edward's class, and June's class. The first two groups included mature children, many

TABLE 2

ACADEMIC EDUCATION OF PARENTS OF TWENTY-FIVE SIX-YEAR-OLDS AT HANAWALT SCHOOL, DES MOINES, IOWA

Education	Mothers	Fathers
Beyond Bachelors Degree	1	4
College Graduate	10	8
One Year College or More	8	9
High School Diploma	5	3
Eighth Grade	1	1

of whom had shown evidence in kindergarten of being ready to learn to read. These children made an easy adjustment to the classroom situation; they were able to button and zip their clothes; they had adequate oral vocabularies; they gave rapt attention to stories for as long as twenty minutes; they followed simple directions, they contributed a great deal to oral discussions, including planning and evaluation periods; and they showed a great desire to learn to read. The children in Edward's group were less mature than Joan's and Fritzie's classes; they were less articulate, showed evidence of having less motor coordination, and their attention span was considerably shorter. The children in June's class were the five least mature emotionally or physically in the entire group. Several used baby talk, all were rather shy and showed evidence of fatigue sooner than did the total group.

Form B of the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test was given the third week of school. Scores of the test were

used as an aid in grouping, but not as the basis for grouping. Various parts of the test were studied by the teacher to help determine the children's abilities in such areas as recognition of likenesses and differences, the ability to reproduce a shape, number sense, and general information.

TABLE 3

BEGINNING GROUPINGS FOR READING OF SIX-YEAR-OLDS AT HANAWALT SCHOOL, DES MOINES, IOWA

Groups	Age	Reading Readiness Score
Joan's Class		
Fred	6-0	87
Mary Jane	6-4	83
Ruth	6-6	89
Mary	6-2	88
Joan	6-1	81
Frances	6-7	88
Jim	5-11	73
Fritzie's Class		
Fritzie	6-6	87
Margaret	6-3	85
Sandy	6-3	72
Polly	6-4	80
Dick	6-0	78
Abe	6-1	83
James	6-0	62
Edward's Class		
Bruce	5-11	53
Beverly	6-3	80
Morris	6-6	80
Ann	6-3	77
Edward	6-4	77
William	6-4	77
June's Class		
Allen	5-10	51
Roger	5-10	57
June	5-10	58
John	5-11	57
Alice	6-1	62

It can be noted from the above table that all of the children in June's class were among the youngest members of the total group. Much of their immaturity could perhaps be attributed to chronological age.

In this setting, the problem of beginning to read was definitely planned, with the needs, capabilities and aspirations of these particular children in mind.

CHAPTER III

EXPLORATORY TECHNIQUES

On the Tuesday morning following Labor Day the twenty-seven youngest of the forty-three children enrolled in first grade at Hanawalt School, Des Moines, Iowa, rushed into the room and began to explore. On one bulletin board was a large, red-brick schoolhouse, supposedly a replica of Hanawalt. In one corner was a large, low, round, yellow table, children's chairs, with picture books inviting investigation. On two sides of this library corner book shelves contained more books. Directly above the table the bulletin board displayed a large cut-out of a cowboy, complete with hat, guns, spurs, pony, and cactus. The cowboy had paused by the ranch gate, under a shade tree, to read a book. Above the ranch gate the sign said, "Read-O-Ranch-No Rustlers Or Bad Hombres Allowed." By the paint easel an empty picture frame mounted by the easel awaited a picture; in the science corner an empty cage and an aquarium waited. The front bulletin board was empty. After about fifteen minutes of exploring the children were called together, sitting on the floor at the teacher's feet, and "school" officially started.

Obviously, the readiness of the room for the children was a planned part of a reading technique, based on an old law of learning most important to the process of learning to read, namely, that learning takes place under pleasant conditions, and when the purpose of that learning is clearly seen by the learner.[1]

After a short "getting acquainted" period the children were asked what some of the things were that they wanted to do this year. Almost in one voice they said, "Read." The word Read was written on the blackboard, and reading was discussed. Some of the reasons for wanting to learn to read expressed were:

1. "So I can read those books on that table."
2. "So I can read the sign there (above the cowboy) and all the signs out in the world."
3. "So I can be a real school boy."
4. "So I can read the directions on the cake-mix box and make the cake by myself."
5. "So I can read the funnies and under the pictures in the paper."
6. "So I can find out things."
7. "So I can read letters and notes."

At this point (where letters and notes were discussed) the children were asked what they would do if they wanted to play somewhere but Mother was not home so they could tell her where they were? They responded with "write a note, if you knew how to write." The explanation was then made that

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[1]Donnal V. Smith and Robert W. Frederick, Live and Learn, pp. 83-84. New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1938.

sometimes a person has an idea--something to say to a person--but he or she is not present to hear. So a system of marks that stand for something was worked out so you could save an idea until later or send it where the people are. Ways in which pictures tell stories were discussed, and the story the cowboy picture on the bulletin board told was discussed. "What does the sign say?" they wanted to know. It was then that the teacher said:

"I had an IDEA when I put up the cowboy.
I thought his ranch should have a name.
I knew I couldn't be back here to tell
everyone the name of this ranch so I put
down the idea up here. It says 'Read-
O-Ranch-No Rustlers or Bad Hombres
Allowed.'"

The children laughed. At dismissal time one bright articulate youngster took his mother back to see the sign and explained, "Mrs. Ballou had this idea for this name when we weren't here so she just wrote it up there to save it for us." It was apparent that to that child, at least, reading that sign was not merely saying the words; it was getting the teacher's idea.

Because children in first grade expect to learn to read the first day of school each was given a sheet of drawing paper on which was written in large manuscript THIS IS MY HOUSE. Each child made a crayon picture of his

house to take home, so he could read the caption to Mother- and prove to himself that he could read.

This first day is described in detail because it is felt that it is of infinite importance in the process of learning to read. It must leave no doubt in the child's mind that (1) the atmosphere of the room is one in which he can live and learn comfortably, (2) what the other children and his parents have said about learning to read in first grade is true, and (3) he is a bona-fide member of a group, a member in good standing, important in the planning and executing of plans in the room.

In the days that followed the children were busy with many things that contributed to the beginning reading process. Each child made a picture of himself to put on the bulletin board by the picture of Hanawalt School, and the observation was made that schoolhouses are not alive until the children come! Someone made a flag, another a jungle gym, all indicating varying degrees of readiness and ability.

A photograph of each child was taken. When these had been developed they were mounted on the front of a nine inch by twelve inch oaktag book entitled, "All About Me." Inside the dictated story of what the child felt to be the important things in his life was recorded in large manuscript. Typical of those of mature students is this one:

My name is Joan Smith.
I live at 2314 Pleasant Street.
My daddy's name is Arthur.
My mother's name is Ann.
I have two brothers.
They are Richard and Tommy.
Richard is four.
Tommy is two.
They are little.
I am bigger, and I go
to school.

Typical of stories made by less mature students is this one:

I am Alice.
I am six.

These booklets were used in several ways. Children were given help in reading them in small groups. Left to right eye movement was checked, and attention span observed. The stories were read to children in other rooms, and when the student teacher from Drake University arrived each child read his story as a means of identification.

Group experience stories were used extensively. These stories were outgrowths of walks in the neighborhood,

pets encountered or brought to school, events at school, room activities, and children's interests.

Every available piece of furniture was labeled with an oaktag sign, as were the door, windows, flowers, fish, etc., for relationships of symbols to objects.

To further develop the idea that reading is a thought-getting process the "Silence Game" was introduced. The words run, jump, skip, were written on the blackboard and demonstrated, without saying a word. Then the children were told to do what they read to do if their names appeared, and there was no talking because the chalk was about to talk. "Listen to the chalk; you can hear it start to talk --- (Striking blackboard with chalk at each syllable) SI - LENCE GAME IS START - ING. The game stops when anyone talks." Sentences such as these were written on the blackboard:

FRED	RUN TO THE DOOR
POLLY	SKIP TO THE FISH
BRUCE	JUMP TO THE LIBRARY

For many children the silent reading was very simple. For others it was necessary to identify the place by matching the word on the blackboard with the labels pasted about the room. About four students could not successfully match the words to participate in the game beyond RUN TO THE DOOR at the first attempt to play the game.

At about this point in the school year Form B of the

Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test was given.[1] On the basis of degree of readiness observed through the preceding three weeks and the results of the test the children were divided into four groups for a part of their reading instruction. These were called Joan's Class, Fritzie's Class, Edward's Class, and June's Class. Joan's and Fritzie's classes included children with an adequate attention span, able to tell likenesses and differences, with good motor coordination, anxious to read. Edward's class was slightly less mature than the groups described above. They matched like words in the silence game; they were able to give attention in a small reading group for only about ten minutes; they evidenced physical fatigue sooner than Fritzie's and Joan's classes. They were more passive in their desire to learn to read than Fritzie's and Joan's.

June's Class included the five least mature students in the class. All were under six years of age; one had a sight handicap, partially corrected by glasses; the attention span of this group seemed to be limited from five to seven minutes. They had difficulty with auditory sounds, detecting likenesses and differences, and became tired easily. They had less general knowledge than the other children according to the results of the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test.

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[1] Appendix, p. 40.

The children's interest in the cowboy was great, and it provided a center of interest and activity for our first unit of work. Simultaneously, children were bringing in many leaves so a study of tree identification developed. In these two areas of interest lie many opportunities for developing a reading program. Edward's and June's classes matched cowboy brands, found differences in worksheets of hats, spurs, cattle, lariats, etc. They also sorted leaves according to kind and identified like tree shapes and their names.

Joan's and Fritzie's classes made fanciful cowboy experience stories, stories of real duties of cowboys, and stories of themselves as cowboys and cowgirls.

All children participated in many rhythm, music, art, and language experiences which cannot be divorced from the total process of learning to read in that they provided a purpose and enthusiasm without which a reading program would suffer greatly. Children learned to distinguish between galloping music, running, walking, and skating music. As horses on the range they trotted or galloped to music; as calves in the corral they ran, and as cowboys they walked and skated to the various rhythms of the music. Among the cowboy songs the children learned to sing "There Once Was A Cowboy" was a favorite. The rhythm of it was discussed, and a rhythm pattern ∪— ∪∪— ∪∪— was drawn on the blackboard. Rhythm patterns of other songs

and poems were discussed, and the children decided to make their own cowboy poem to fit the pattern of "There Once Was A Cowboy." Once done, they were delighted to find it would also fit the melody, and could be sung. A child brought an autoharp, and the children had fun singing cowboy songs to the simple chord accompaniment of the instrument, and concluded that it was most logical that the cowboy, far out on the range, would use this type of instrument (often the guitar) to accompany himself. These activities cannot be identified as totally music as language has been a great factor in their development. Other language activities included reports given by three children who had visited dude ranches the previous summer, a report on feeding and care of horses by a child who owns one, reports on various phases of range work and life prepared with the assistance of parents from books and pamphlets taken home from school by the child, books obtained at the city library, and books available within the home. The popularity of reporting was so great that parents were pressed into helping find information. The grammar used by cowboys was discussed (some parents had expressed concern over it), and an attempt made to develop the concept that people in various walks of life have different standards of acceptable English. One child mentioned that, "Uncle Remuses' is just right for him, but it wouldn't be right for us."

Art experiences included finger paintings of cactus plants; clay cowboy boots, hats, horses, and cattle; hobby

horses with oilcloth heads, button eyes, yarn manes and tails, and a broomstick body; drawings which were made into a booklet, each page depicting a phase of cowboy life, the captions for which were dictated to the teacher, then pasted on the appropriate page by the child; and water color paintings.

As a culminating activity "Cowboy Day" was held. Children wore their cowboy clothes to school. Cattle were cut out of construction paper and each child branded his own with a brand he had designed, and cut a potato print. The cattle were then mixed together and strewn about the room, and the cowboys "rounded-up" their own cattle--another matching experience. The children staged a rodeo of tricks out-of-doors, and had a marshmallow roast and song-fest around the "campfire."

The interest in the leaves drew the group into a discussion of why leaves turn brown and fall. This developed into a detailed study of weather in which the interest remained (in varying degrees) until school was dismissed in the spring. In order to be able to report information to the class several members of Joan's class were given copies of Fall Is Here. With about fifteen minutes of help the group was able to read the book proficiently, and, reveling in their skill, decided to read the book to the entire class rather than tell what they had read! This interest in the book seemed to be the time to introduce the pre-primer to

Joan's Class and Fritzie's Class. In two weeks both classes had read all three of the Scott-Foresman pre-primer series. As many as seven "new" words were presented each day, but they were read easily by the children because they had had many of these words in their experience stories, and because they understood what reading really is. While they were delighted to be reading from books, the continuance of the use of large charts held their interest longest because therein they were obtaining and recording scientific information about weather--enriching the reading program far beyond the thought content of: Oh look. See, see. Oh, oh, oh. See Mary. Edward's and June's classes too, showed quite an interest in the weather stories. They labeled the weather instruments, kept the weather calendar, wrote and read simple weather stories and bits of information. Soon they, too, began to read the pre-primers, but only after they were reading experience stories smoothly and having no difficulty with comprehension. Edward's class read the pre-primer quickly and easily. June's class had more difficulty. They read the three pre-primers published by each of three companies before they were able to proceed to the primer.

The procedure thus far described in this report has been, by and large, the introductory phase of the total process of learning to read. The growth-in-power period which followed stressed vocabulary building and phonetic skills. In addition to the vocabulary presented in the primer

several activities were used experimentally in an attempt to enrich and expand the controlled vocabulary of a basal text. Each child made a dictionary, the pages captioned on the proper page words they felt the entire room would find useful in writing. Some of these included Hanawalt, Grand Avenue, school, mother, father, cowboy, and cowgirl. Each child added words needed in writing as he needed them. Thus reading, as well as writing, vocabularies grew in relation to the child's ability. One child's dictionary included names of cloud types, weather instruments, proper names of his relatives, and such words from his speaking vocabulary as assume, evaporate, and tremendous. Children in June's class entered the vocabulary from the text each day. This proved to be valuable to the group in that they became aware of beginnings of words and their sounds. This group also made a large picture dictionary of brown wrapping paper, pasting pictures cut from magazines and catalogues on appropriate pages.

A fishing game which all children in the room appeared to enjoy was used in several different ways, depending upon the skill to be acquired. A small magnet was fastened to a yardstick to make the fishpole. Fish were oaktag cards, folded once, and fastened shut with a paper clip. For working on beginning and ending sounds a set of pictures of familiar objects was made, and the fish had a letter concealed within their fold. These fish would be placed on the floor, a child

would catch one on his magnet "fishpole," then find a picture card to go with the letter caught. Ending sounds, combination beginnings, possessives, identifying vocabulary were played in almost the same way. The game became popular as an independent activity for a group to play alone when the teacher was having another reading group. The advanced groups found challenge in a scientific adaptation of the game. The fish contained names of weather instruments and cloud types. Once caught, "fish" must be properly placed on a chart such as:

_____ is a black rain cloud.

_____ tells us how fast the wind is blowing.

If the words in the fishes were difficult the children needed only to refer to the science corner where pictures of cloud types and actual weather instruments, some commercial and some made by the children, bore identifying labels.

A play store erected mainly for use in arithmetic contributed to reading skills in many ways. Children told the clerk they wanted "a toy that rhymes with fall" or "a fruit that begins with gr." Written orders were filled, and the children wanted a delivery system. It was then that passage ways between tables were named streets and avenues. Numbers were assigned to chairs along the tables, so an address could be determined.

As valentine time approached the store was converted into a post office. Letters and notes were addressed, and mail deliveries made twice a day.

Flash cards were used from time to time in various ways to strengthen sight vocabulary. While the children did become more proficient at calling out the words on the cards, the carryover to recognizing words in context was slight. As a reading technique with this particular group of children the skill gained was insignificant.

Just how children acquire a word attack technique varies with each child. For some it is something discovered suddenly, which immediately sheds light on this entire process of reading. For others it is a long, tedious, learned process proceeding from beginning sounds to endings to combination sounds to rhyming words until the child has built for himself a system of word identification which will make of him an independent reader.

With the intent of encouraging independent reading the library corner was supplied with books on interest and reading levels of the children. Two davenports were made by the children from orange crates to which a back and arms were fastened, cotton padding added, complete with a red plastic covering secured with carpet tacks. A washable cotton loop rug was added to the library corner in an attempt to make the activity of independent reading as pleasurable and inviting as possible.

A discussion of the beginning reading techniques used would, in this case, be incomplete without a description of parent-teacher relationships. The writer feels that parents must be brought into the picture as soon as possible, must know the teacher both as an educator and as a person, must understand what she is attempting to do and why. If parents feel assured that their child's school experiences are worthwhile they can contribute significantly to the total school program, and to their own individual child's attitude and progress.

The second week of school a coffee for the mothers was held at one of the mothers' homes. A student teacher from Drake University took charge of the room in the absence of the teacher. Following a social and get-acquainted period the school principal introduced the teacher, who spoke to the group.[1] A discussion period followed in which mothers asked questions, commented on the school program, and many offered assistance of various natures.

Mothers expressed a desire to see their children read in a group, and to learn something more about manuscript writing. Parents were scheduled to visit according to reading groups. After the children had read they went out for recess with the student teacher from Drake. Parents remained for a lesson on how to do manuscript writing. When they felt adequately proficient each wrote a note to his child in

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[1]Appendix, p. 41.

manuscript. These were later put into a big book for the library. Knowing how to do manuscript writing, parents could provide many reading experiences for their children of a kind the school could not provide.

Mothers began coming to school often to visit reading class; they came and worked with groups of children; they hunted reading materials for various social science and science units; they wrote reports on their interests, hobbies, vocations, professions, or on materials they had read or places they had seen appropriate to the thing we were studying; they helped with art projects, music, and woodwork; they kept the fathers informed, and many of them became active in school activities; they invited the teacher (and often her husband and son) into their homes, enabling the teacher to see the child in his home environment and thus better understand his problems; they helped make the classroom a workshop. Learning to read and the activities connected therewith became a family affair in many instances where interest and participation were high. Evaluating parent participation as it affects the beginning reader is difficult, but it is believed that the bond between parent and child is strengthened, and that emotional security of such a relationship is of infinite importance in the child's learning to read.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

Reading is an important part of modern living. Written communication is second only to oral. The importance of learning to read cannot be underestimated.

Just how and when the important skill of reading is to be taught has long been the concern of parents, teachers, psychologists and other educators. Various approaches are being used with varying degrees of success. The method or techniques used by a particular teacher depends, at least in part, upon the philosophy of education to which that teacher ascribes.

Most educators today agree that a child's success in beginning reading depends, in part, upon his readiness for the task. He should be emotionally and physically ready. Some children are ready at a much younger age than others, and it is believed to be psychologically bad for a child to be thrust into a reading program before he is able to be successful.

Two general approaches to the teaching of beginning reading are being used. One is a text-book approach in which the child is supplied with a reading vocabulary a word at a

time. The systematic presentation and review of the words, followed by using them in sentences and stories is the initial reading experience provided by the proponents of this plan. The second is the experience approach in which the child begins to read by dictating a sentence from his experience to the teacher. Then the printed symbols represent to him a thought--his thought--which was recorded. It uses the child's own vocabulary, encompasses his interests, and takes reading out of the word-calling realm into the realization that reading is a thought-getting process. It is with this belief in mind that the beginning reading techniques herein described were developed.

The children with whom these techniques were used were six-year-olds at Hanawalt School in Des Moines, Iowa. Hanawalt is located in a lovely residential area of the city. The parents of the children are, for the most part, successful business and professional people, well educated, and interested in their children's education. The children are healthy, neatly dressed youngsters. Many of them mirror the stimulation of the homes from which they come. They have been read to a great deal, many have traveled rather extensively, and most of them would rather lead than follow. All of beginning techniques used with these children could not, therefore, be used successfully with all groups; modifications and adaptations of them, however, could be made for use with children of other socio-economic groups whose interests and abilities

might differ greatly from those of the children included in this study.

Several techniques were used:

1. Made the room attractive for the children by posters, charts, specimens, and displays aimed at increasing the child's interest in learning to read.
2. Planned with children to discover interests and helped children organize and evaluate purposeful activities.
3. Provided a reading experience the first day of school when interest was high.
4. Took photographs of the children so each could mount his picture on a booklet and write an experience story about himself.
5. Labeled furniture, supplies, and equipment.
6. Introduced the Silence Game.
7. Matched pictures, the pictures being appropriate to the interest unit being developed.
8. Compared and matched shapes of leaves.
9. Provided associated rhythm, music, art, science, and language experiences as cohorts to a good reading program.
10. Made individual and group experience stories.
11. Read from pre-primers and primers.
12. Made personal dictionaries.
13. Played several variations of the fishing game.
14. Erected a play store and postoffice, and devised an addressing system.
15. Used flash cards.
16. Worked with parents to acquaint them with the reading program and bring them into the classroom to work with and observe the children.

17. Provided books, materials, and facilities to encourage independent reading.

18. Gave tests to check progress and help diagnose problems.

The achievements through the use of these techniques vary with individual children. In general it can be stated that the following achievements were observed:

1. All children showed enthusiasm for reading throughout the year; it was invariably the first thing they planned for their group each day. The slow group showed just as much enthusiasm as the best.

2. Children developed a greater sense of responsibility, greater appreciation for books and stories, and a feeling of success and importance.

3. As children became more proficient in reading, their interests came to the fore and broadened. During Brotherhood Week, for example, the children became much interested in reading about other lands after one boy read a story about an Italian boy.

4. Individual achievement, as measured by Form BB of the California Reading Test given at the beginning of second grade, indicates that of the twenty-five children tested three had a grade placement score of fourth grade or more, eight had scores of third grade or more, ten had scores of second grade or more, and only three children dropped below their grade level, they by one, three, and four months respectively.[1]

5. Children read materials of many kinds, feeling their reading was not confined to a given text. They brought articles from newspapers to school to read to the class; also encyclopedias, books, advertisements, recipes, instructions for making toys and letters written by mothers or friends.

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[1]Appendix, Table 4, p. 40.

Some of the valuable outcomes expressed by parents were:

1. Parent and child were drawn closer together as a result of working together at school.
2. Interest in the entire school program increased.
3. Understanding the child became easier as their common interest in reading increased.
4. Parents became well acquainted with the teacher, making it easier to talk with her as problems arose and to volunteer to do with and for the children at school.

The writer believes that the techniques described contributed significantly to the reading ability of each child in this particular group. A child has a right to learn to read anything he wishes, regardless of whether it does or does not appear in a textbook. The child comes to school with a vocabulary. It should be used in his beginning reading experiences, not pushed aside in favor of one devised for him by someone unaware of his particular abilities and interests. Techniques which are aimed mainly at increasing a child's ability to call out words can produce a reader who is mechanically perfect but unable to comprehend what has been read, and void of enthusiasm for reading. Unless a reading program leaves children enthusiastic about reading it falls far short of its goal.

The technique to be recommended by the writer as the best for use with slow learners is not a technique but a quality: patience. Coupled with a given technique, it can

mean the difference between stability and frustration; a feeling of success and failure; a like or dislike for reading. The developmental process of learning to read is slower with slow learners. Experience stories must be kept short and drawn from the child's interests; work periods must be short, since they become fatigued easily; the group or groups should be kept small to provide an intimacy and individualization impossible with a large group; and many variations of a technique must be employed (such as matching cowboy brands, leaves, hats, cars, pets, shoes, mittens, geometric forms, flowers, houses) with the slow group which would be repetitous and boring to faster groups. June's class did not reach the independent stage of reading until the middle of second grade.

With the faster groups the process may be accelerated considerably. The teacher's chief responsibility becomes providing materials which continues to challenge the children, and so guide and direct their reading to provide maximum growth.

The exploratory techniques used in this study seemed to contribute to the happiness and enthusiasm of the children. The teacher, too, became more enthusiastic as the exploring and experimentation unfolded in the classroom. It is recommended that other teachers interested in developing techniques for use with specific groups of children will accept the challenge and further experiment with ways of teaching children to learn to read.

TABLE 4

INDIVIDUAL SCORES ON OTIS QUICK SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TEST ACCOMPANIED BY SCORES ON METROPOLITAN READING READINESS TEST, SCORES OF CALIFORNIA READING TEST AND STANDING IN RELATION TO THE MEAN

Child	Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test	Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test	California Reading Test Grade Placement
1. Fred	126	87	[illegible]
2. Mary Jane	126	[illegible]	[illegible]
3. Abe	126	[illegible]	[illegible]
4. Ruth	120	89	[illegible]
5. Mary	119	88	[illegible]
6. Alice	117	62	[illegible]
7. John	114	57	[illegible]
8. William	114	77	[illegible]
9. Fritzie	114	89	[illegible]
10. Joan	111	81	[illegible]
11. Jim	111	73	[illegible]
12. Dick	111	78	[illegible]
13. Frances	108	98	[illegible]
14. Edward	107	77	[illegible]
15. June	105	56	[illegible]
16. Ann	103	77	[illegible]
17. Roger	104	57	[illegible]
18. Margaret	104	85	[illegible]
19. Polly	103	80	[illegible]
20. Morris	103	80	[illegible]
21. [illegible]	103	[illegible]	[illegible]
22. [illegible]	101	[illegible]	[illegible]
23. Allen	94	[illegible]	[illegible]
24. James	94	[illegible]	[illegible]
25. Bruce	91	[illegible]	[illegible]

APPENDIX

TABLE 4

INDIVIDUAL SCORES ON OTIS QUICK SCORING MENTAL ABILITY TEST ACCOMPANIED BY SCORES ON METROPOLITAN READING READINESS TEST, SCORES OF CALIFORNIA READING TEST AND STANDING IN RELATION TO THE NORM

Child	Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test	Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test	California Reading Test Grade Placement
1. Fred	126	87	4.2
2. Mary Jane	126	83	3.6
3. Abe	126	83	3.4
4. Ruth	120	89	3.4
5. Mary	119	88	3.3
6. Alice	117	62	1.6
7. John	114	57	2.6
8. William	114	77	3.4
9. Fritzie	114	89	2.0
10. Joan	111	81	3.3
11. Jim	111	73	2.8
12. Dick	111	78	4.1
13. Frances	108	88	3.9
14. Edward	107	77	2.9
15. June	105	58	2.5
16. Ann	105	77	2.8
17. Roger	104	57	1.8
18. Margaret	104	85	3.3
19. Polly	103	80	2.4
20. Morris	103	80	2.0
21. Sandy	103	72	2.0
22. Beverly	101	80	2.7
23. Allen	94	51	1.5
24. James	94	62	2.0
25. Bruce	91	53	4.2

SPEECH TO MOTHERS

How nice it is to be here with you this morning! And how important it is for us to get together over a cup of coffee and get to know each other better. Those of you who saw "The King and I" last week no doubt thrilled, as I did, when Patricia Morrison, with the children gathered about her feet, sang "Getting To Know You." The Drake-Des Moines Council of Parent Education felt that parent-teacher-child relationships are so important that they adopted "Getting To Know You" as their theme for the year. In getting better acquainted we can eliminate some fears that stand as barriers to learning. If I know Mrs. Smith rather well I will have no quams when I go to the phone to tell her Susie has spilled paint on her dress. It affects my program and my mental health as a teacher. Likewise, if Mrs. Smith gets to know me as a person she is not as likely to be reluctant to call me when Susie comes home all upset about something that has happened at school--something I might be able to aright if I only know about it.

I am a native Iowan. I was born and reared on a farm in north Iowa where my father still lives. My teaching experience is very broad--I have taught in the country, on the secondary level, elementary, university students, and nursery school. My choice is teaching children to read.

My husband teaches History at Des Moines Technical School. We have one child, Stephen. He is four years old and attends a private nursery school just down the street from where we live, out in Beaverdale. We are a school loving family!

Teachers are the brunt of many jokes, and I would suspect that if you told your husband this morning that you were going to a coffee for the teacher, he probably made a wise crack to add to the collection! You've all seen this descriptive bit about modern schools:

> The teachers are afraid of the principal, the principal is afraid of the superintendent, the superintendent is afraid of the school board, the school board is afraid of the parents, the parents are afraid of the children, and the children are afraid of no one!

I also saw a cartoon where the children were tearing up the classroom in fine style, and one fellow said to the other, "Isn't there <u>anything</u> we can't do?" But most of the jokes center around the old maid schoolteacher, and in this case she was driving down the street when the traffic policeman blew his whistle and held up two fingers for her to stop. She didn't stop, however, so when the cop caught her he said, "Lady, don't you know what it means when I hold up my fingers and blow my whistle?" She blushed and replied, "I ought to. I taught school for thirty years."

Things are getting better for the schoolteacher, though. Last summer I saw a cartoon in which a shapely young blond was strolling toward the pool in her bathing suit. Two little boys were watching when one said, "Say, isn't that ol'

Miss Jones?" And the other replied, "Yeah, and am I gonna have a more healthy respect for her next fall." Things are looking up!

In spite of all of these, I'm happy to be a teacher.

In thinking about what to discuss with you today, I thought you'd be anxious to hear about what your children are doing and will be doing in reading, numbers, language, science, social studies, and writing; also how this total school life is affecting your child as a citizen or a person. Actually, I would prefer to discuss that aspect first, but let's begin with reading.

Learning to read is one of the most difficult tasks your child will bump into in his lifetime. It is not uncommon for a medical or law school to flunk 5 to 10 percent of its students, yet, the country over, 20 percent of the children in first grade will not learn to read. There are several reasons for this. One is that many children are not ready to learn to read when they enter first grade. There is no magic in the first grade door that insures success to all who walk in. To be ready to learn to read a child should be able to tell that this shape is like or different from this one. How foolish it would be to expect a child to distinguish between <u>want</u> and <u>went</u> if he cannot distinguish between large objects. He should also be able to sit and give attention for ten or fifteen minutes. He should be able to tell spoken words that begin alike, and words that rhyme.

He should be physically ready--hear well, see well, and be well coordinated. In addition to these, he should be independent enough to do many things for himself. The game your children said they played last week was actually a test aimed at measuring how ready your child is to learn to read. If you would like to see your child's test make an appointment with me, and I will be glad to go over the test with you.

Many of the children were champing at the bit, anxious to learn to read. Others were less ready, more passive about learning to read. Because of their wide range of differences the children were grouped for reading instruction. Your child is in a group where he can work comfortably. An easy way to make a neurotic of your child would be to put your slow child in a fast group where he cannot keep up, or put your fast child in a slow group which does not challenge his abilities. The groups are flexible. Chances are your child will belong to several groups before the year is over.

Reading is a thought-getting process, not a word-calling process. Therefore your children's first contact with reading was to read an idea we ourselves put down in written symbols. We used to begin to learn to read by laboriously learning a series of sounds. Eventually children put sounds together to make a word, then words together to make a sentence, which in turn, should convey an idea. Now we know this "grunt and groan" method produced slow readers and made too many eye movements. The emphasis was upon

word-calling, not thought-getting. As a result we have many adults who "read" a page--and suddenly discover they don't know what it said.

If reading is interpreting ideas, the reading material should contain ideas within the realm of the child's experiences. For that reason we are making individual and group stories which the children themselves dictated using their own vocabularies. Next will come the pre-primers, later primers.

Phonics plays an important role in developing power for independent reading. After children read quickly and with a high rate of comprehension, some will need help with developing word-attack techniques. Many will develop a technique by themselves. All will receive some help in phonics; how much and what kind will depend upon the needs of the groups. They will learn to classify things, and how to think and evaluate as they read. Yesterday a group was reading--THIS IS WHAT I WOULD BUY WITH A NICKEL. The children were to draw a picture of what they'd buy. Joan was troubled. She said, "I don't know what I'd buy because I don't know the circumstances. I'd buy the sensible thing. For instance, if I were going to a birthday party I'd buy one of those five cent boxes of crayons down at Dahl's--but if I were going downtown to meet my father and my hair was all messy I'd buy a comb, cause it would be the sensible thing." Good thinking?

In numbers the children will learn concepts by counting and manipulating real things. Later they will add simple combinations by "thinking things together;" subtracting by "thinking things away."

I believe writing should be purposeful, not merely a practice session. If the children are writing a note to mother it must be good, so she can read it. Please do not call it printing. Printing is a mechanical process done by a printing press. Your child does manuscript writing. Some psychological implications are involved which I do not have time to discuss now. If you mothers do manuscript you can write signs and notes which will be helpful to your child's reading. You might write a card to prop on the table that says Here is Your Milk. Also signs and labels for towels, furniture, and clothing.

Along with writing goes spelling. Your children will learn to spell the words they need. Already most of them can spell Hanawalt! Time was when spelling was taught from a list prepared for a text book by a person far removed from Hanawalt School, Des Moines, Iowa. Too often children could spell the words in the list when they were pronounced, but were unable to spell the word in context. Instead of using the list, children will dictate sentences and stories. These will be in connection with their units of work or special interests. I will keep an alphabetized list of the words learned. It will be checked with the list in the

spelling book near the end of the year, and the words we have not learned will be presented.

Social studies involves persons, places, and events. Our cowboy unit is adventure in social studies which provides an area of interest and helps children understand other people and their way of life. No doubt the children have already told you about our "Panel of Experts." This is a very formal discussion in which the panel members (the experts) answer questions addressed to them by members of the audience. One day Tommy addressed his question to Miss Andre thus:

> Miss Andre, can you tell me--are all elephants the same color?

Miss Andre replies:

> Well, Mr. Lundall, elephants mostly look like their relatives. Like people, you wouldn't expect all of them to be the same color, but the important thing, Tom, is that, like people, they're all the same inside."

It is of this type of social concept that our social studies program is directed.

Your child needs to <u>feel</u>, <u>taste</u>, <u>touch</u>, <u>smell</u>, and be curious about the world in which he lives. Our science program aids him in finding real answers to real inquires of children. We also want the science program to help develop a scientific attitude, wherein we test and try before we believe. We will be collecting things, testing, and experimenting. You can help your child by keeping alive his curiosity, and taking time to find scientific and real answers to his questions, or telling him you don't know. Don't

provide a mythical answer. Six-year-olds are becoming independent in many ways. Don't try to tell them thunder is angels moving their beds around. Instead explain it as a part of weather and suggest that the two of you get a book about it the next time you're at the library.

The ability to communicate with people orally is the skill I would put on the top of the list. People have little idea as to how well you read, but in a few minutes they can discover how well you can communicate with others. Your children will be urged to express themselves often and well, orally and in writing. You can help by having your child write thank you notes for gifts and kindnesses. When he says "What shall I say?" you might tell him to think of how he felt when he received the gift, rather than of what words to use. Writing is expressing ideas and feelings, not merely choosing the correct words to use.

But I could not talk to you today about reading, writing and arithmetic without talking about how all of this affects your child as a person. It is possible for a child to be academically perfect, but a bad boy. But, you say, that's mother's job. Not entirely. Doubtless many parents had done a fine job in this area in Germany, but the government found that through the schools propaganda could be so inculcated into the minds of the students as to change their attitudes, morals and loyalties. If we are to save our children from falling prey to this sort of thing

we must teach them to be THINKERS. To help do this we help children learn to plan. All of you know adults who seem to get an overwhelming amount of work done. How? Because they know how to plan and organize, rather than merely to follow someone else's plan. Each day at school the children decide what they need to get done, and we write those plans on the blackboard. If the planning done is theirs the work they do is more likely to have purpose for them. This morning one group decided to have a game before they did their work. One child objected saying, "That's just like having dessert first." Planning involves responsibility, too, which is void when all children must do is obey. Many people in European nations have learned to obey, but not plan. Given freedom, they are at a loss as to how to use it. Within the scope of this concept lies the shaping of governments--the building of world understanding or the lack of it. Planning and the use of good judgement is not reserved for adulthood or parenthood. Commend your child for wise choices he makes, and you are helping him to be an independent thinker.

Child psychologists tell us children must

1. Feel right about themselves--important and adequate.
2. Feel right about others.
3. Be able to meet demands of life as they have to meet them.

A child's problems are in direct relation to the adults in

his world, modified by his ability to adjust to them. Those adults?--you and me. What can we do?

First of all, we can remember that children are important as people now. Take time to meet each days problems each day. Emotions are so tied up with intelligence, learning, and physical health they cannot be divorced from any of them. Help me. I can't teach your child very much when he's full of problems. Call me. Let me know when he's worried, unhappy, upset, and tell me why, if you can. And now, you see, here we are right back to where we started--talking about eliminating fears. We can do it more easily if we know each other and work together.

Thank you for giving me your child to walk with for a little way. This one year in first grade is but a short time in his total school life. I want it to be a pleasant year, an exciting year, and a satisfying year. I feel a little bit like I did when Stephen was born. My first thought when the nurse brought him in was: Thank you, God, for giving him to me for a little while. Soon he must walk alone.

Take time to live---that's what time is for;

Take time to work---it is the price of success;

Take time to think---it is the source of power;

Take time to play--it is the foundation of wisdom;

Take time to be friendly---it is the road to happiness;

Take time to dream---it is hitching your wagon to a star;

Take time to look around---the days are too short to be selfish;

Take time to laugh---it is the music of the soul;

Take time to be courteous---it is the mark of a lady;

Take time to understand your child---it is your reward for motherhood.

When I hung out gay pinafores in rows
I wanted time for flowers, not washing clothes.
Now leisurely I plant a tulip bed
And wish for rows of pinafores instead!

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